The meeting was called to order by chair Harrison at 3:04 p.m. in Schofield 202.

1. The minutes of October 13th were approved as distributed.

2. Open Forum:
   Gapko commented on the reconsideration of restructuring the Senate and Executive Committee suggesting restructuring the Compensation Committee and considering Chairs of Senate Committees to the Executive Committee. Another concern voiced by Gapko was the lack of representation by academic staff on the Senate Executive Committee.

   Conderman expressed concern about the freshman experience courses. Chair Harrison replied that she would try to arrange someone to speak about the subject at the next Senate meeting. Miller suggested Barbara Lozar as someone who was knowledgeable about the subject. Harrison also asked Conderman to gather more explicit questions from his colleagues. Another question posed was, "how do departments get involved?"

3. Agenda item: Closed Meeting Workshop--Dr. Tom Miller
   Chair Harrison expressed concern with the committees' lack of knowledge regarding the process of closing a meeting and yet continuing to conduct the meeting according to Robert’s Rules of Order. She also mentioned that Robert’s Rules conflicts with the Wisconsin Statutes regarding closed sessions. Miller was introduced as a person quite familiar with the process and someone who had been involved for some time with the mechanics of closed sessions. Details provided on attachment.

4. Agenda item: the committee considered entering closed session to discuss appointments to the University Research and Creative Activity Council. A roll call vote was taken with all members voting yes except Pitts who voted no. The committee entered closed session.

5. The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobby Pitts
Secretary for the Meeting
Open Meetings Issues
October 21, 1997

- Wisconsin is a very 'open' state, more so than most, and that's the overriding thing to remember. The purpose of a closed meeting is to allow a 'governmental body' (which includes department personnel committees, Senate Executive Committee, etc., but not staff meetings such as a chairs' council in a college) to discuss in closed session those very few issues, specified in statute, which might appropriately be discussed in closed session.

- All meetings are presumed to be open and must always begin in open session.

- The reasons for closed sessions are few, and only those issues for which the meeting was closed may be discussed in closed session. The statutory reference is 19.85 (1) (b, c, or f). DPCs typically use 'b' and 'c'—'b' refers to tenure and 'c' is used for other employment (e.g., promotion, retention). Committees like the Executive Committee typically use 'f' which allows the discussion in closed session of 'personal histories . . . which, if discussed in public would be likely to have a substantial adverse effect upon the reputation of any person referred to in such histories. . . .' (e.g., for recommendations regarding committee appointments).

- The Open Meetings Law supersedes Roberts' Rules.

- The governing body is responsible for following the Open Meeting Law. If there is a lawsuit, individuals attending the meeting are liable.

- The meeting notice (which should be provided at least 24 hours before the meeting) should be 'reasonably likely to apprise interested persons . . . [as well as any 'news media who have filed written requests for such notice'].

- A roll call vote is required to go into closed session.

- The body must adjourn from closed session.

- No minutes need be taken in closed session. Any motions with the votes for and against should be recorded.

- Actions taken in closed session should not be announced or discussed until they are due to be reported.

- In tenure decisions and only tenure decisions the candidate for tenure may request an open meeting and the DPC must accede to that request. If the candidate requests an open meeting, however, all of the meeting must be open. The candidate for a tenure position must be given written notice of this statutory right.